

LOS ANGELES COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

2615 S. GRAND AVE., SUITE 100
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90007



United We Stand



Joseph N. Smith
Director

MINUTES REGULAR MEETING Wednesday, August 10, 2011

Present:

Commissioners

Bob Archuleta, Chair
Carvel Gay, Vice Chair
Dave Culmer
Ramon Rodriguez
Stephanie Stone

Absent:

Commissioners

Mark MacCarley
Rudy Garcia
Fred Flores
Steve Rosmarin

County Department

Military and Veterans Affairs

Colonel Joseph Smith, Director
Tatiana Rosas, Executive Secretary

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Approval of Minutes

Chair Bob Archuleta called the meeting to order at 1:37 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Stephanie Stone. Due to a lack of a quorum, only five Commissioners present, the approval of minutes was postponed.

Roll Call

As noted above.

Chairman's Report

Chair Archuleta stated that as of today there are only 34 days until September 11th (9/11) and we all remember that day as our parents probably remember November, 1942. We were attacked as a nation but we have recovered on this the 10th anniversary we need to acknowledge those that have fallen and that sacrificed their lives that day and the families that loss their loved ones.

Chair Archuleta stated that Commissioner Stone has worked very hard with the GI Forum on a program for 9/11 that will be held at the National Cemetery. Commissioner Stone will be forwarding more information on the program as it gets finalized and confirmed. The Chair stated that there will be a 9/11 Memorial at the Montebello Park at 5pm followed by a veteran ceremony at 7pm at Rose Hills at the Sky Hill Chapel in Whittier. "This meeting is dedicated to those in the Navy, Air Force and those killed on the rocket attack in Afghanistan. May they rest in peace and God Bless them for serving our Country."

Comments from Audience (three minutes each)

No comments from the audience.

Veterans Advisory Commission Meeting

Minutes of August 10, 2011

Page 2

Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority – Stephanie Hardy

Stephanie Hardy, Director of Policy and Planning for the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) greeted everyone presented and thanked Colonel Smith and the Commission for their invitation to address the Commission. Ms. Hardy stated that LAHSA is a Joint Powers Authority established in 1993 as an independent agency by the County and the City of Los Angeles. LAHSA is the lead agency in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care and coordinates and manages over \$70 million dollars annually in Federal, State, County and City funds for programs providing shelter, housing and services to homeless persons in Los Angeles City and County.

Ms. Hardy reported that the Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority has released its biennial Greater Los Angeles Homeless County Report and it revealed that there are estimated 51,340 homeless persons in Los Angeles County. This represents a 3 percent decrease from 2009. She also reported the following findings from the Homeless Count Report:

- 18 percent of the homeless are veterans, and veterans have a higher rate of chronic homelessness than the general population. Additionally, the report found a 51 percent increase in the number of female veterans on the streets.
- The homeless population is aging, with nearly 34 percent of chronic homeless persons aged 55 or older. This will increase the public cost of homelessness.
- Of the homeless population, 33 percent suffer from mental illness, 22 percent have a physical disability and 34 percent struggle with substance abuse.

The report shows a 9 percent decline in the homeless populations since 2009. She stated this is attributed to resources that have been dedicated to reducing homelessness such as setting aside 10 percent of Section 8 vouchers for homeless households, committing to the construction of 2,200 permanent supportive housing units and supporting community development block grant funding. Ms. Hardy also stated that both the City and County have been allocated additional vouchers, 150 for the County and 250 for the City.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked if the vouchers cover hotel/motel and she stated that no they did not but they are resources available if that is needed.

Commissioner Stone inquired how did this program work with 211 and Ms. Hardy replied that it works in the same way. She stated that 211 LA County is an informative and referral (I&R) service in the nation, helping approximately 500,000 individuals and families in Los Angeles County each year. 211 LA County functions as a gateway to the county's vast and complex social service delivery system. 211 LA County links ALL Los Angeles County residents to services that strengthen families and improve their economic success; equips them to prepare their children for school; helps them find and keep jobs with opportunities for advancement; helps them identify and gain access to public benefits and subsidies; and increases their access to quality health care.

Chair Archuleta stated that there are organizations out there and it's a shame that they are not getting the recognition that they deserve. "We should give this kind of information to the media. The Colonel and the Department have done their part."

Commissioner Stone stated that Colonel Smith invited her to join the LA Veterans Collaborative Committee Meeting which consists of a group of collaborators in an ongoing support to develop a system to provide veterans/military and their families greater access to resources in LA County.

Chair Archuleta thanked Ms. Hardy for her presentation and her service to veterans. He asked that she return in the future and provide the Commission with an update.

Veterans Advisory Commission Meeting
Minutes of August 10, 2011
Page 3

Veterans Home Support Committee – Steve Rosmarin

Ms. Jeanne Bonfilio, Public Information Officer, Veterans Home of California, stated that the skilled Nursing Unit will open in February 2012. Ms. Bonfilio stated that there is no waiting list at the Lancaster and Barstow Homes and there has to be no service related disability to be accepted. Everyone should support and attend the Harley Davidson Charity Ride (flyer inside the Commissioners packet) scheduled for September 11th. Commissioner Gay suggested that she invite Jay Leno to the event and he would provide her with all the pertinent contact information.

Chair Archuleta thanked her for her report and wished her a successful event on 9/11.

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Report – Colonel Joseph Smith

Colonel Joseph N. Smith, Director, Military and Veterans Affairs provided the following report:

Total National Guard and Reserve personnel on active duty is 92,504 a decrease of 98.

- Armed Forces Recruiting continues to be strong.
 - All four active services met or exceeded their 2011 goals to date.
 - 5 of 6 Reserve Components met or exceeded their 2011 goals.
 - Air Force Reserve achieved 98% of its goal.
- Three World War II veterans will receive the “French Legion of Honor” at 11am August 23, 2011 in recognition of their distinguished service in France during the war. The Ceremony officiated by the Consul General of France-Los Angeles David Martinon will be held at the LIFE house Church, 18355 Roscoe Blvd., Northridge, CA 91325.
- The Department will again have a booth at the Los Angeles County Fair September 3-30, 2011.
- Director will attend the State CVSOS Fall Training Conference September 26th through September 30th.
- DMVA commended by Los Angeles County Quality and Productivity Commission. Bi-annual visit of Quality and Productivity Commission 40% of staff focused on returning combat veterans and 60% of staff taken care of survivors, dependents and benefits.
- The Soldiers Project is a non-profit group of volunteer licensed psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, marriage and family therapists that offer free, confidential counseling to military service members and veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts and their extended families. Dr. Judith Broder is the Founder/Director of the program and can be reached at (818) 761-7438 or at info@thesoldiersproject.org.
- Director spoke with Commissioner Rudy Garcia and he stated that his wife Alma is doing better not available to attend Commission meeting today. Commissioner Garcia will be sending his resignation letter to his Supervisor.
- The Department set up a VIP tour for Supervisor Antonovich and his family in Hawaii to tour the USS Arizona Memorial, the USS Missouri, and the Pacific Aviation Museum.

Chair Archuleta thanked Colonel Smith for his Department report.

New Business

Commissioner Stone asked the Commission to be a co-sponsor of the 9/11 Remembrance Event; there will be no obligation to the Commissioners but the time she has already invested. Chair Archuleta stated that it would be an honor to co-sponsor the event and asked that Commissioner Stone contact individually those Commissioners not present so they can either vote favorably or against. Those present all stated that they were in support.

Veterans Advisory Commission Meeting
Minutes of August 10, 2011
Page 4

Item's for Next Month's Agenda

City of Glendale Housing Program – Peter Zovak
Jose Ramos
Vet Hunters – Ron Hansel
Update on Bob Hope Patriotic Hall – Bill Gelpi
Veterans Home Support Committee – Steve Rosmarin

Reminder by Chair Archuleta that the October Commission meeting will be held at the West Los Angeles Home.

Commissioner Archuleta will invite two Veterans for September's meeting to offer the Invocation and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Good of the Order

Commissioner Stone; stated that she is a new Board Member for New Directions, Inc., and that Toni Reinis, Executive Director is retiring. She attended Navy Week and toured the USS Lincoln that hadn't been docked in San Pedro in 21 years. She sits on the women's collaborative on discuss women issues like military sexual trauma (MST) and how to bring greater awareness to MST.

Commissioner Culmer; stated that he'll at The Montford Point Marine Association, Inc., in the Washington, D.C., area from the 25th to the 28th of Aug. He will be in D.C. to celebrate the 69th Anniversary of the first Marines arriving at Montford Point. During this visit, there will be an Evening Parade, Town Hall discussions, and visit to the National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC). The expense paid trip is for 100 of the original 20,000 people from 1942-1949 segregated at Camp Lejeune. He was one of the last and closed the place down in June 1949.

Commissioner Rodriguez; apologized for not being able to attend last month's meeting.

Commissioner Gay; stated that its been a very information meeting with lots of input even though there is no quorum. He asked Colonel Smith if there was a designate Public Affairs Officer. Colonel Smith responded that Josephine Richardson, Administrative Assistant, is the person who distributes and disseminates information to the veteran organizations, the VA and the Board Deputies, ESGR, to the 4 Generals, and various other entities.

Commissioner Archuleta; stated that disseminating information is how this meeting started. He reminded everyone of 9/11 a sacred time for our Country. Everyone should attend a 9/11 event. On a personal note, his son Matthew graduates from Ranger school on April 26th. He asked everyone how can they help our homeless veterans and how can we accurately count them? We can't do it alone; this is where the public information needs to come in.

Chair Archuleta thanked everyone present and adjourned meeting at 3:20 p.m.

Tatiana Rosas
Executive Secretary
August 10, 2011

Note: The next Commission meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, September 14, 2011 at 1:30 p.m. in Suite 100 at the Department of Public Social Services site at 2615 S. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA.